

### 1.1.1 Mojave Green Rattlesnake

Scientific Name: *Crotalus scutulatus scutulatus*

#### 1.1.1.1 Protection Warranted

##### 1.1.1.1.1 *Endangered Species Act*

- Not listed or proposed as threatened or endangered, or a candidate for listing, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

##### 1.1.1.1.2 *Other Protections*

- Listed as a sensitive species by the State of Utah (UDWR 2006).
- Global heritage rank is G5 (NatureServe 2007).
- Nevada heritage rank is S4 (NatureServe 2007).
- Arizona heritage rank is S5 (NatureServe 2007).

#### 1.1.1.2 General Description

The Mojave green rattlesnake extends 24 to 51 inches (61 to 129.5 centimeters) in length (Stebbins 2003). The coloring of this snake is similar to a diamondback, with a body color ranging from yellowish-tan to light brown and dark diamond shaped markings extending along the entire length of the back. The tail of this species contains white and black bands. Light facial stripes run from in front of the eye to behind the eye, which contrast with the more darkly colored head (Stebbins 2003).

This species is nearly exclusively active at night, morning, and late afternoon (NatureServe 2007). This species is nocturnal in the summer months and commonly active in both the morning and late afternoon in the spring and fall (NatureServe 2007).

#### 1.1.1.3 Distribution

##### 1.1.1.3.1 *Historic Distribution*

The historic distribution of this species is unknown.

##### 1.1.1.3.2 *Current Distribution*

The current range of the Mojave green rattlesnake extends from southern Nevada and southwestern Utah to the southern edge of the Mexican plateau in Puebla and adjacent Veracruz and from the western edge of the Mojave Desert in California to western Texas (Stebbins 2003, NatureServe 2007).

#### 1.1.1.4 Habitat

The Mojave green rattlesnake inhabits valley flats; toe slopes, bottoms, and swales; gently sloping ridges and hills; and nearly level plateau or terraces that range in elevation from sea level to nearly 2,530 m (Stebbins 2003, Csuti and Crist 1998, NatureServe 2007). This species is primarily found in low desert scrub or barren desert, but can also be found in various other desert scrub, grassland, and riparian woodland vegetative communities (Csuti and Crist 1998, Stebbins 2003, UDWR 2005). In the United States, vegetation in most occupied areas include creosotebush, palo verde, mesquite, or cacti (UDWR 2005). Species refuges include animal burrows, spaces under or among rocks, or similar sites (NatureServe 2007). In the spring, the Mojave green rattlesnake commonly coils under a small tree or shrub in early morning (NatureServe 2007).

#### 1.1.1.5 Life History

##### 1.1.1.5.1 *Reproductive Biology*

The female Mojave green rattlesnake gives birth to up to 17 offspring between July to September (Stebbins 2003, NatureServe 2007).

#### **1.1.1.5.2     *Diet***

The Mojave green rattlesnake primarily consumes small mammals (including kangaroo rats, mice, ground squirrels, rabbits, and hares), lizards, snakes, birds, and bird eggs (Stebbins 2003, NatureServe 2007). This species sometimes eats other snakes and spadefoot toads (NatureServe 2007).

#### **1.1.1.5.3     *Migration***

This species does not migrate long distances or locally (NatureServe 2007).

#### **1.1.1.6        *Threats Warranting Protection***

Declines in Mojave green rattlesnake populations are primarily attributed to habitat loss. In addition to habitat loss, some commercial collection may pose a threat to populations. A brief summary of threats in the context of the five listing factors used to assess species for listing as threatened or endangered under ESA is described below.

##### **1.1.1.6.1     *The Present or Threatened Destruction, Modification, or Curtailment of its Habitat or Range***

This species experiences habitat destruction and fragmentation from municipal and utility development (UDWR 2005).

##### **1.1.1.6.2     *Over-Utilization for Commercial, Recreational, Scientific, or Educational Purposes***

This species does experience some pressure from collection for human use (UDWR 2005).

##### **1.1.1.6.3     *Disease or Predation***

Neither disease nor predation has been identified as a threat to the Mojave green rattlesnake's population.

##### **1.1.1.6.4     *The Inadequacy of Existing Regulatory Mechanisms***

The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms has not been identified as a threat to the Mojave green rattlesnake's population.

##### **1.1.1.6.5     *Other Natural or Manmade Factors Affecting the Species' Continued Existence***

No other natural or manmade factors have been identified as affecting the Mojave green rattlesnake's continued existence.

#### **1.1.1.7        *Conservation***

There are no known conservation measures in place for this species.

#### **1.1.1.8        *Species Status***

##### **1.1.1.8.1     *Rangewide***

The Mojave green rattlesnake population size and trends are unknown (UDWR 2005). This species is common in suitable habitat; therefore, the population is presumed to exceed 100,000 (NatureServe 2007). Over its entire range, the population is stable ( $\pm 10$  percent population fluctuation) in the short term and relatively stable ( $\pm 25$  percent population fluctuation) in the long term.

##### **1.1.1.8.2     *VRCMA Boundary***

The status of the Mojave green rattlesnake within the VRCMA Boundary is unknown, although potential habitat is present. No occurrences have been recorded within the VRCMA Boundary by the Nevada Natural Heritage Program (NNHP 2006).